

From Rep.  
Johnson

Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your consideration of House Bill 5883.

The City of Omer in Arenac County relies upon the sucker season to support its annual festival. This event is responsible for a large share of the city's tourism revenue as people come to the city in the spring for the annual sucker run in the Rifle River.

We have had a few years where the sucker migration concluded prior to the season being open and our anglers have missed out on some netting opportunities as a result. In recent years, the season has fallen about two weeks too late.

Currently, a change in state statute is required before the dates for the netting season are changed. This legislation would allow the Natural Resources Commission to set the dates each season so that migratory patterns and climate conditions can be taken into consideration.

This reform has already taken place with other specialty seasons such as spear and bow-fishing.

I appreciate the assistance of the DNR on this matter and their support for the legislation. Committee testimony made it clear that this concern spreads far beyond simply Omer.

Our ability to complete this in our lame duck session allows for the NRC to make this modification a part of their 2013 schedule.

Thank you for your consideration.